

State Govt forks out on DVD to explain Queensland Health pay bungle

by Anna Caldwell
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QUEENSLAND Health has created a 32-page document and a DVD to tell its 65,000 staff how to read their payslips

The revelation came as Health Minister Paul Lucas refused to deny it could take up to 12 months to fix the failed payroll system.

Mr Lucas has said for weeks the Government was committed to fixing the tens of thousands of pay adjustments by the new financial year, but yesterday he could not guarantee workers would get accurate group certificates on time.

Mr Lucas said there were "medium and long-term" issues that needed to be rectified.

And he wouldn't rule out an alleged leak from his own department that the system had no chance of being fully functional within 12 months.

The 32-page "how to" document lists more than 1280 codes and explanations and notes their location on the payslips.

Queensland Nurses Union secretary Gay Hawksworth said the document itself was a minefield, and incredibly difficult to wade through. "There is guessing involved when you wade through it and try to match it to a payslip," she said.

Thousands of Queensland Health staff have inundated the department with complaints about deciphering their payslips since the crisis began three months ago.

A Queensland Health memo obtained by The Courier-Mail revealed the department had a DVD and "fact sheets and posters" to explain the payslips.

Opposition health spokesman Mark McArdle said it was outrageous money needed to be wasted on basic explanation.

Mr Lucas said he was "very, very angry" the payslips were so confusing, and said it needed to be fixed.

Meanwhile, the Queensland Nurses Union said its "worst nightmare" had been realised when Mr Lucas could not rule out a year of problems with pay.

"The continuing viability of this pay system needs to be considered - it might be that we need a new payroll system," Ms Hawksworth said.

"The only reason things appear to be getting better now is because of the sheer amount of manual labour going into paying people."

A letter from an ex-Queensland Health employee Natalie Kiddle was tabled in Parliament, revealing the department owed her \$4500.

Ron Kitching's Remarks:

This bungle is becoming more and more ridiculous by the day. A 32 page DVD to teach workers how to read their pay slips. That is, if they receive any pay.

The final solution will be reached, as it was in the Soviet Union when workers declared:

They pretend to pay us so we pretend to work.

But it is a disastrous result for the consumers of the alleged services "provider".